

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) An article having the shape of a toothbrush and being useful for cleaning teeth, A toothbrush with highly tapered bristles having superior flexibility, wherein each of said bristles is made of polyethylene terephthalate or polybutylene terephthalate, and tapered ~~starting at~~ from a position in the range of from 2.8 to 3.5mm or less from an end thereof, with a tapered end having a diameter of 0.02mm or less.

2. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein the tapered end of each of the bristles is 0.01mm or less in diameter.

3. (Original) The toothbrush of claim 1, wherein each of the bristles is tapered starting at a position of 3.0mm or less from the end of the bristle.

4. (Withdrawn) A method of manufacturing a toothbrush with highly tapered bristles having superior flexibility, comprising the steps of:

dipping 3.5mm-long portions from ends of monofilaments

for bristles into erosive chemicals such as sulfuric acid or sodium hydroxide until the dipped portions of the monofilaments are completely eroded;

neutralizing the shortened monofilaments prior to rinsing and drying them;

attaching the shortened monofilaments on a predetermined portion of a toothbrush; and

grinding the shortened monofilaments with the use of a 240# mesh paper rotated at 2600 to 2700rpm for 3 to 10sec, a 320# mesh paper rotated at same speed for 3 to 10sec, and a 400# mesh paper rotated at same speed for 3 to 10sec.